

Eco Team Work Session - notes
September 19, 2005

Attendees: Eric, Joe, Burt, Rob, Ben, Val, Pam, Chris, Jennifer, Mikell, Bob (Parametrics)

Overall plan for Eco Team work sessions

- We agreed on the following plan for Eco Team work sessions through the end of October:

Overall goal and objectives: The Eco Team's goal over the next six weeks is to develop clear direction to the LWG on what needs to happen for the ERA over the next year, including

- changes to the problem formulation statement to support an effective ERA
- changes to the conceptual models we are using to describe Portland Harbor's ecological system and the food web structure
- agreement on the approach we will use for doing the ERA, including
 - o how the food web model will be used
 - o approach for assessing risk to benthic community
 - o approach for assessing risk to other receptors, especially fish, lamprey and sturgeon – deciding how will we combine multiple lines of evidence.
 - o approach for assessing risk for specific contaminant types, especially PAHs (additional lines of evidence needed)
 - o other areas as identified
- high priority data gaps that need to be filled to produce an effective ERA for the RI
- expectations on how the data gaps will be filled
- direction on effectively modeling food web dynamics and the effects of contaminant fate and transport on ecological receptors

Tasks: To achieve these objectives, the Eco Team will need to

- look at the problem formulation statement, ecological system conceptual model, and food web structure that the LWG has proposed and agree on changes needed, with justification
 - understand and assess the ERA data we currently have and agree on additional data needs to fill in the ecological CSM and food web structure model; then prioritize and explain/justify data needs
 - develop agreed-upon expectations for how the data gaps should be filled, including timelines for getting the work done
 - agree on the ERA approach for areas where the approach is unclear (i.e., food web model, risk to benthic community, risk to fish and other receptors, risk from specific contaminant types, etc.) and develop clear direction to the LWG with justification to support it
 - draft and finalize clear written direction to the LWG that captures the team's consensus in an organized and complete way
- Over the next six weeks, we'll need to think about how to communicate our vision and expectations to the LWG, as well as determining how we want the LWG to respond to all or parts of our direction (i.e., we can develop complete, written expectations/direction to the LWG, present it to them in early November, identify non-negotiable areas and points that are open for comment, and determine specifically how and when we want the LWG to respond to our direction).
 - The Tribes have made it clear that they support aiming for a 2008 ROD, but not at the sacrifice of protecting human health and the environment, if that becomes a consequence of sticking to the 2008 deadline.

Summary of EI's review of ERA deliverables received from the LWG to date – Val and Chris

- Problem formulation has not been done sufficiently, and we need to revisit and revise this as needed.
- Lamprey ammocoetes, sturgeon and Chinook have been identified as receptors of concern, and LWG documents note that they will be protected on the individual level (rather than at the population level), but we need to resolve whether lamprey ammocoetes *and adults* will be protected at the individual level.
- We also haven't identified habitat types for these species within the ISA, and we're lacking management objectives for how their habitat will be protected and/or restored.
- We could clarify that we are assessing lamprey, but using ammocoetes as the assessment method.
- We need a plan for assessing risk to lamprey if we can't find enough of them in the ISA. The tribes believe that we need lab studies to determine toxicity.
- **Group agreement:** We will revisit the PH Workplan Appendices to add/revise management objectives for lamprey, sturgeon and Chinook habitat, and think ahead about how we will use that information. We can pull in useful information from ODFW, lamprey studies, and other sources, and justify changes to the Appendices based on this new information and the team's agreement on how we'll use it.
- **Next steps:** EI will take a first cut at revising the Workplan Appendices with help from Joe, Jennifer, Ben and ODFW/USFWS to include sufficient problem formulation and proposed management objectives for species habitat in the ISA. Target due date – EI sends revised Appendices to the full Eco Team by September 28 for review and comment. If possible, changes based on comments will be made before the October 3-4 Eco Team work session so that we can move forward with an agreed-to revision.
- **Questions about COPCs at the site** – Table E-1 in Appendix B of the 9/9/05 PRE lists 46 COPCs. We need to look at this list, determine what pathways weren't included and identify any changes needed. Also, we need to clarify *our process* for identifying COPCs and tell the LWG how we want them to do it. Questions/issues that will come up during the process include whether to look across the river as a whole or at localized areas, and the need to look at more than just tissue because PAHs and other contaminants don't bioaccumulate.
- **Next steps:** Parametrics will look at the COPCs identified by the LWG and develop a proposed process for identifying COPCs and bring it back to the Eco Team for consideration. Target due date – send findings and proposed process to the Eco Team by September 28 for review and comment.

Changes to the LWG's proposed ecological CSM

- The group discussed the LWG's proposed ecological CSM in the 9/9/05 PRE and Burt's CSM model, and agreed on needed changes to the LWG's CSM.
- Once we've finalized the ecological CSM, we'll need to compare it with what's being used for HH to make sure they are consistent; ideally, HH and Eco would use the same CSM.
- Some of the work that's been done under NRDA to describe species life histories and identify pathways and adverse effects can be used in this process.
- **Group agreement:** Combine the front half of Burt's CSM (sources) with the back half of the LWG's CSM (receptors) with changes to both sides as discussed and agreed upon by the group.
- **Next steps:** Burt, Rob and Jennifer will work on creating two additional exposure medium boxes on the source side of Burt's model and other changes as discussed to Burt's model. Brent Findley (EI) will combine Burt's CSM with the LWG's CSM and work with Joe, Jennifer, Rob and Chris to ensure accuracy of the revised model. The NRDA "complete/significant" definitions will be added to the revised CSM with changes if needed. Target due date – Brent will send the revised CSM with definitions to the whole Eco Team by September 28 for review and comment. The revised CSM will be printed in wall-size for use at the October 3-4 Eco Team work session. At some point, the team will need to articulate justification for our changes to the LWG's model.

Schedule for Eco Team work sessions

- Oct 3-4: Eco Team work session in Portland – Mikell will send a draft agenda out to the Eco Team for review and comment.
- Oct 17: Eco Team work session in Centralia/Olympia – Joe will find a meeting location
- Oct 24-25: Eco Team work session in Seattle – Joe will find a meeting location
- Nov 1-2: Eco Team work session if needed – location TBD

Benthic meetings

- **Group agreement and next steps:** Joe will schedule an Eco Team meeting to talk about upcoming benthic tissue sampling and approach, including Jay Field and Mike Anderson (during the week of Sept 26-30). We'll then need a follow-up meeting with the LWG. We should consider delaying the November 1 Benthic Approach deliverable if needed.